

JOHN UNDERWOOD.

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 41.]

FEBRUARY 29, 1840.

Mr. DAWSON, from the Committee of Claims, submitted the following

REPORT :

*The Committee of Claims, to whom was referred the petition of John Underwood, a clerk in the office of the First Auditor of the Treasury, report :*

That the petitioner is one of the four clerks employed in said office on the accounts of the customs ; that, "for thirty two years past," as is certified by William Parker, the late chief clerk, "four clerks have been regularly employed in the office of the First Auditor of the Treasury, upon the examination and settlement of the *accounts of the customs*, which," he says, "I consider as requiring the full attention and constant employment of said clerks for the whole of the usual office hours, and are of importance equal to any other accounts settled at the Treasury Department ;" that, while the petitioner was thus engaged, having a distinct but equal share with the other three clerks, all at the same salary, viz., \$1,150 per annum, the only clerk employed in the office to adjust the accounts of the internal revenue and direct taxes died, leaving a great number of said accounts open and unsettled. It appears, also, that the reason why the Auditor did not immediately appoint a new clerk to fill his place was, that, the revenue system having been broken up, and many of the accounts become exceedingly complicated, it was considered to be almost impracticable for any one who had not had a previous knowledge of the business to adjust the accounts intelligibly and correctly. It was, therefore, on the suggestion of the petitioner, decided by the Auditor to assign the laborious part of the business to one of the clerks in the office who had formerly been on these accounts, and that the petitioner, who had also "been engaged on them for many previous years, until he was transferred to those of the customs," should have merely the supervision, and assist in difficult cases, by which means it was supposed that the work might be kept up ; that, very shortly after this arrangement, the petitioner had, of necessity, to assume the whole of the duties, which he has continued to discharge until the present time, in *addition* to his stated duties on the accounts of the customs ; that, at the time of presenting his petition, he had examined and stated no less than six hundred and fifty-five of the accounts of internal revenue and direct taxes, many of the statements embracing from four to twelve quarterly returns, besides performing various other services connected with them ; and that more than \$300,000 from these sources had been paid into the Treasury